

How to have a blessed & successful marriage

Ephesians 5

Pray

I heard a story of a young man who went to the father of his future wife

- To ask him for her hand in marriage,

He wanted to impress the father by quoting from the Bible

- So he started by quoting proverbs 18:22 that says, “Whoever findeth a wife, Findeth a good thing, and obtaineith favor from the Lord”.

Then the dad quoted scripture back at him saying Paul said in 1 Cor. 7:38 “He that marrieth doeth well, but he that marieth not doeth better”. I thought that was funny!

- I’m so thankful my bride’s dad gave me the blessing to marry his daughter!

I heard about a couple that was celebrating 50 years of marriage together.

- And at their party a newspaper reporter was sent to interview them
 - to try to find out the secret to the longevity of their marriage.

And so the reporter sat down with the husband and said,

- “Sir, tell us how it is you have been married for 50 years to the same woman.”
 - The man said, “Well let me tell you. My wife she is from Texas
 - and it probably goes back to our honeymoon.”

And the reporter says, “Well what happened?”

- He says, “Well my wife and I decided to honeymoon at the Grand Canyon.
 - And we were riding those you know pack mules together
 - and we went along a very narrow little path
 - and I noticed that my wife’s pack mule stumbled a little bit
 - and she leaned forward and said to that mule,
 - ‘That’s once.’”
 - And he thought that was kind of weird.
 - He didn’t know her that well.
 - What does that mean?
- And they went a little bit further and the mule stumbled again
 - and she leaned forward said into the mule’s ear, “That’s twice.”
 - He says, “Then we went a few feet further. Again the mule stumbled.
 - She pulled a pistol out of her purse & shot the mule in the head.
 - Killed him dead right there on the spot.”
- he said, “That’s outrageous. You shouldn’t do that to an animal. That is horrible.
 - She looked at him and said, “That’s once.”
 - So they were married ever since then.

we are going to talk about how to have a marriage God’s way.

- You really don’t want to have it the world’s way.

Our enemy is hostile toward the family and everything that it stands for.

- I have never known a time when the family is under attack like it is today

So we want to look to the Word of God on how to have a successful marriage!

The Bible speaks directly to men and women

- and tells us how to have a successful marriage.

When I first saw Shawna at church it was Love at first sight! I knew she was the one!

- I met her in April of 2016 & proposed 8 months later in December of 2016

- And then we were married 9 months later on Sept, 17th 2017

Its been awesome & our love has only grown stronger

- Because we have sought to build our marriage on the principles
 - Ephesians 5 teaches about marriage.

Shawna & I started our relationship off reading marriage books

- and here are a few of them that really helped us!

Christian Dating by Greg Laurie

The countdown for couples

Love & Respect The 5 love languages

When God created everything each day he said it was good

- but after He creates Man & woman & tells them to be fruitful & multiply
 - He says it was **very good** = he saw marriage was really good!

the best thing about marriage, it's God's idea, He's the one that came up with it,

- so he knows how it works.

There is no perfect marriage. You got two imperfect people.

- But here's how it works if it's going to be a blessed & successful marriage,
 - it's two people who are in love with Jesus, seeking the Lord,
 - reading their Bibles, loving one another, drawing near to the Lord,

That's the glue, **that's the secret. This is how it stays strong.**

- If one person or both people get away from the Lord
 - Before long the thing will unravel

show the Strong Marriage triangle

1 Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.

Paul points us to our role model we should be following!

- **Jesus is the best role model for us b/c He is perfect!**

The Bible says in John 6:68 that **Jesus has the words of eternal life!**

The day you gave your life to Jesus

- You made a decision to follow Jesus as your Lord & Savior
 - And you became a child of God = Adopted as one of Gods Children!
 - And you are very dear & precious to God & He loves you!

Paul tells us here as dear children that we are to **be imitators of God**

- To imitate: means to follow or mimic
 - Just like a child imitates, follows & mimics their parents
- Kids love to play the game copy cat = were they copy everything you say

We are to be representations of God copying His every move the best we can!

- like a xerox machine

In Acts 11:26 the believers in Antioch were living like Jesus in every way

- The non-believers there said, "You're like a little Christ, a miniature Jesus
So the non-believers called them Christians: which means like Christ
- The Christians thought it was a cool name, so it stuck!

God is not annoyed when we follow His footsteps!

- **Imitation is the highest form of flattery**

God loves it when we follow in His footsteps & wants us to be about His business!

Jesus did say, **Follow Me & I will make you fishers of men!**

Paul said **imitate me as I imitate Christ!**

1 Peter 2:21 tells us **For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps** = Walk like Jesus walked.

This idea of imitation, runs throughout the scripture. All the way back in Leviticus,

- God said, "Be Holy because I am Holy."

Lets look at our first way we are to walk as dear children of God in vs. 2

2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

Paul tells us here we are to walk in love just like Jesus did

- He loved & ministered to everyone w/ sacrificial love
 - He washed the disciples feet
 - He risked his life for the women caught in adultery
 - He gave His life for us on the cross!
- Jesus demonstrated what Agape love looks like

Agape love is loving someone regardless if they reciprocate that love back to you or not.

- Agape love is the highest form of love

Paul showed us what Agape Love looks like in **1 Cor. 13:4-8, The Love Chapter** as he says
In vs. **4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; 6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things,**

hopes all things, endures all things. **8 Love never fails.**

- A good test to know if your walking in this Love is to put your name in place of love
 - Only Jesus can fulfill these all perfectly

God says here if we have this kind of Agape love & show it to others

- It's like a sweet-smelling aroma!

As Paul moves on he will point out a counterfeit kind of love in the world

3 But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; **4** neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

Ephesus was a very evil & wicked city

- And Paul warns the believers there to not live like the world
 - Ephesus was like our culture today that given over to wickedness

Here Paul tells us to walk in purity

- And to not give into the counterfeit love of the world as he mention
 - **Fornication:** This word in the Greek is pornea
 - And its where we got our English word pornography
 - It refers to all sex outside of marriage
 - Which is Satan's counterfeit of love
- Pornography & premarital sex is a huge problem in our world today & it is sin!

God created sex & it is very good for a husband & wife when it is inside of a marriage

- And true marriage is between 1 man & 1 woman!

Paul also mentions we should not be involved in **foolish talking or coarse jesting**

- Which is not fitting = perverse conversations, filthy talk or a gutter mouth
 - Shouldn't even be named around us Christians!
- If you have something to say, let it be good. pleasant. Let it be edifying & thankful

God doesn't want us to have a gutter mouth & filthy language or to be unpure

- You might ask what's the big deal? Why shouldn't I be involved in it?
 - Lets look at the next verses to see why it's such a big deal?

5 For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. **6** Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. **7** Therefore do not be partakers with them.

Paul says don't be deceived

- As those who continually practice these sins
 - Will not inherit the kingdom of God = They wont go to heaven!

The world will tell you these things are not a big deal & there cool, don't worry

- But they don't understand the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience
 - And they won't go to heaven if they practice these sins & don't repent
 - They are deceived & Paul says don't be partakers w/ them!
- Don't let them deceive you!

Paul says here Godly people must not covet.

- You can translate the word covet to **pant after. Sort of like an animal**
 - With its tongue hanging out. They thirsty or hungry
 - Coveting is to eagerly desire something that belongs to another.
- To set the heart on your neighbor's wife or husband or something that is theirs.
 - And we are clearly told in Scripture to not covet.

8 For you were once darkness, but now *you are* light in the Lord. Walk as children of light **9** (for the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), **10** finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. **11** And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose *them*. **12** For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. **13** But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.

The Bible says in **Psalm 119:105** **Your word is a lamp to my feet, And a light to my path.**

- We should be walking the way the Bible wants us to walk
- Our old life represents darkness and not doing what the Bible says
 - When we come to Jesus we come out of darkness
 - & we begin to walk in the light of God's Word

We are to shine the light of God's Word on everything in our lives

- As the Word of God exposes darkness
 - **Just like you don't know how dirty a room is until you turn on the light**

when you drive your car at night, you turn on your headlights.

- Because the headlights of your car exposes what is in front of the vehicle.
 - it exposes potential problems, obstacles, they keep you from harm.
 - Just like God's Word helps us navigate through life.

14 Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light."

Paul encourages believers who are sleeping spiritually to awake!

- TO wake up and take their Christian walks seriously & walk in the light!

Jesus said **Matthew 5:14-16** saying, **"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all *who are* in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they**

may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Have you ever seen those lamps with dimmers or different degrees of light?

- Sometimes Christians can become not as bright as they once were
 - At one time they were full throttle shining for Jesus
 - But they began to dim and not be so bright for Jesus

Don't let the enemy rock you to sleep & try to stop you from shining brightly for Jesus!

- If your asleep spiritually & not shining bright for Jesus

Jesus wants you to WAKE UP! & Rise & Shine!

15 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, **16** redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Paul encourages us to walk wisely as believers by redeeming the time

- Redeem in the greek = Buy up, improve opportunity

Buy back the time You've lost before you were saved.

- The idea is making how much time you have left count.
 - **Do something that counts for eternity.**
 - make the most of the opportunities your given to make Jesus known!

The Devil will do all he can to try to get you to waste time

One thing that I always heard Pastor Chuck say

- That has been stuck in my head is this

“You only have one life, It will soon be past, and only what's done for Christ is going to last”

Ever single one us only have one shot at this life

- What are you living for? What do you spend your time doing?

Anything we do that is not in the name of Jesus & for His Glory is a waste of time!

Paul said in **Philippians 1:21** **“To live is Christ and to die is gain”**

Our lives are so Short

Tombstone Dash

The Bible says, James 7:7 **“Life is a breath”**

Psalms 144:4 **“Mans days are like a passing shadow.”**

James 4:14 **“Life is a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.”**

Psalm 103:15 **“As for man, his days are like grass; As a flower of the field, so he flourishes. For the wind passes over it, and it is gone.”**

To **walk circumspectly** has the idea of walking with precision,

- placing your step precisely carefully on the right path accurately and exact.
- It conveys the idea of looking, examining, investigating something with great care.

- Sort of like a contract that you are about to sign.
 - Read the fine print before you affix your signature to it.
 - It is attention to detail.

if you want to have a successful marriage

- We need to read the fine print of what the Word of God says & walk it out
 - A successful marriage is the result of **attention to detail**.
 - Good marriages don't just happen randomly or by accident.

They happen because people apply what the Word of God says.

- Take your time before you make a decision and do something impulsively.
 - Its good to pause

17 Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Have you ever wondered what Gods will is for your life?

- Gods will for your life is to walk closely to Jesus
 - To know Him And make Him known

We know Gods will for our life's by getting into Gods Word

18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, **19** speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, **20** giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Paul's drawing a contrast between being drunk and being filled with the holy spirit

- you see alcohol is a depressant it loosens people
 - because it depresses their self-control it depresses their wisdom
 - it depresses their balance it depresses their judgment
- the holy spirit has an exact opposite effect = the holy spirit is a stimulant
 - he moves every aspect of our being to a better more perfect performance

I hope we all know that to be drunk with alcohol is sin

- That's what the Bible clearly teaches

It says here drunkenness is dissipation = it's wastefulness

Did you know a lot of the top leaders don't drink b/c they know how destructive it is

Galatians 5:21 "those who practice drunkenness will not inherit the kingdom of God"

Paul is saying don't be drunk (Controlled w/ alchol) ; But Be filled (controlled) w/ the Spirit

- like wind filling a sail= Let the Holy Spirit fill your sails.

Let the Holy Spirit control you in all that you say and do.

- Don't let alchol control you!

Acts 1:8 Jesus Said, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me

God wants to fill us with His Spirit like a hand fills a glove

If you want to be the husband God wants you to be = you need the power of the Holy Spirit.

²¹ submitting to one another in the fear of God. ²² Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. ²⁴ Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶ that He might ^[a] sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. ²⁸ So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.

the ancient Greek word that's translated submitting here literally means to be under rank

- it's a military word that speaks of the way that an army is organized
 - among levels of ranks

you have generals and majors and captains and sergeants and privates

- and you are obligated to respect those who are in a higher rank

imagine if you have a private and you have a general

- the private can be smarter than the general
- the private can be more talented than general
- the private can be a man of greater character than the general
 - but you know what he's still under ranked to the general

and so the idea of submission doesn't have anything to do with someone being smarter

- or better or more talented it has to do with god's appointed order

when Paul says submitting to one another he's saying be a team player in the fear of god

- and he gives four, examples of submission.
- the first of four examples of submission.

○ He says wives are to submit to their own husbands,

but husbands, since it says submitting to one another, we also have a role of submission

- It says husbands Love your wives as Christ loved the church.

I believe sacrificing your life to the point of death is pretty submissive!

- So the husband is to submit in his role by loving his wife supremely, sacrificially.
 - Then children are to submit to their parents by obeying them in eph. 6
 - Fathers are to submit in the role by not proking their children,

There are several different examples of submission that are in ch. 5 & 6.

Sometimes, marriage can become a duel power struggle

- but God never intended it to be a duel.
- **He wants it to be a duet.** One complementing the other.

- Husbands loving their wives like Christ loved the church because when the woman feels secure in her husband's love for her she will want to submit
- But When she is insecure in his love, that's when she doesn't want to submit. She doesn't know what silly decision he's going to make to place the family in jeopardy.
- But when she feels secure in his love, it's a delight for her to submit.
 - And when she is so sweet, and submissive,
 - it's easy for her husband to love her more.
 - And it becomes not a duel, but a duet & a beautiful dance through life.

When a husband leads & is the head of the home

- it does not imply that the husband is superior to the wife.
 - but he is responsible for her to God.

So when it talks about the husband is the head of the wife.

- It's not superiority. It's functionality.

In first Corinthians chapter 11, it says, "**The head of every woman is man. The head of man is Christ. And the head of Christ is God** the Father.

Now since Jesus submitted to God the Father

- Does that imply that Jesus is inferior to the Father? Not at all.
 - Jesus said, **my Father and I are one.**
 - Jesus himself said that He was equal with God,

But for the sake of divine functionality, the Son surrendered His will to the Father.

- He submitted to the will of the Father, even though He was equal with God.

Paul tells **husbands** to love their wives two times, in verse 25 & 28.

- The word **husband** in English, is a word that means to till the ground, or to cultivate.
 - It's how a farmer would cultivate the Earth,
 - till the ground, plant the ground, care for the ground.

In John chapter 15, Jesus said, in the old King James version. **I am the true vine. And My father is the husbandman.** So the idea of a husbandman, or husband,

- is one who cultivates, tills, works that relationship, seeking to bring growth out of it.

So, husbands are the cultivators, tillers of the ground of marriage,

God's called husbands to lead, so ladies encourage him in that.

- And it doesn't mean that you're not part of the decision making process.

I value Shawna's input and we dialogue about things all the time!

- but ultimately when it comes to a major decision, it falls on me.
 - I'm responsible to make that decision that affects my family,
 - but I want her to be part of that process.
 - I want her input and God gives her wisdom and we're a team.

it's kind of interesting to note that Paul in dealing with the wife only spoke sixty-four words

- but here in speaking to the husband he speaks a hundred and seventy three words
 - over twice as many words to the husband
- there's a whole lot more spoken to us as men.
 - b/c the weight of the responsibility as leaders, rests upon us.

if your husband would ask you to do something that is against God's law

- then you are not to submit.

there is an absolutely inescapable law here

- **you cannot bless your wife without blessing yourself**

If you invest in your wife & your relationship with her

- its putting logs on the fires of love to keep it burning strong!

if you bless her you'll be blessed & benefit yourself

- but when you neglect your wife you're neglecting yourself

when you hurt your wife you're hurting yourself and it will come back to hurt you

we all know what it's like to neglect something like a noise or a maintenance issue

- on your car when a check engine light goes on...

- Story of my car not getting oil change

maybe you cut your finger and and it starts getting infected

- don't ignore it or neglect it

We do whatever we need to do to take care of it before it becomes a serious problem

- We need to do the same with our marriages when there is a maintenance light

When you see a warning light like recognizing the romance is gone in your marriage.

- get back and do what you did in the beginning. Go on dates!

- Don't wait for the surge of emotion to come first

- Do the foot work and the emotions will follow

If you will invest in their love language the romance & feelings will come back.

And if you don't feel like it, if you don't want to do it, if you don't think she deserves it,

- none of that matters. **Here are your marching orders from God.**

- **"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church."**

- **We are commanded to do that weather we feel it or not!**

Husbands are to enter her world & get to Know their wife.

- The Bible says, "**Dwell with your wife with understanding.**"

- And it actually goes on to say, "And if you don't do this

- your prayers will be hindered."

your prayers can be hindered because you are out of alignment with your wife.

- You have forgotten that she is supposed to be number one your best friend.

If You want your wife to blossom & bloom & be the woman of God that she can be.

- You love her. You value her. You treasure her. You invest in her

- **Encourage her with the Word Of God**

³⁰ For we are members of His body, ^[a]of His flesh and of His bones. ³¹ "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." ³² This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. ³³ Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

Here we see the 2 words from my favorite marriage book Love & Respect!

- women need to know that they're loved.

- The husband needs to know that you respect him.

Love & respect cycle

In my devotional book = I have a devotional on marriage

- And I define **MARRIAGE** with an acronym with 8 points from Gods Word

Show Marriage devotional page

When you get married you make a serious commitment before God!

And it reminds us of the most important commitment you will ever make

- Which Is more important than a marriage commitment
 - Its your commitment to Jesus Christ!

Maybe today God has put it on your heart to make an everlasting vow w/ Him!

- To follow Jesus from this **day forward**, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, **to love** and to **cherish** Him till infinity & beyond!

Pray & Share Gospel